

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA
SHREVEPORT DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CRIMINAL NO. 07-50097-02

VERSUS

JUDGE S. MAURICE HICKS, JR.

VERNON CLAVILLE

MAGISTRATE JUDGE HORNSBY

MEMORANDUM ORDER

Before the Court is a Motion for Pretrial Juror Questionnaire and to View the Juror Questionnaires (Record Document 45) filed by the defendant, Vernon Claville ("Claville"). Claville requests that he be permitted to serve prospective jurors with the questionnaire attached to his motion as Exhibit 3 and that the parties be permitted to view the completed questionnaires at least 24 hours before trial. He further argues that the questionnaire is in the best interest of all of the parties and the Court "so as to select a fair and impartial jury to hear this very important case." Record Document 45 at 2. The Government did not respond to Claville's motion. For the reasons which follow, the Motion for Pretrial Juror Questionnaire and to View the Juror Questionnaires is **DENIED**.

Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 24 states, in pertinent part:

(a) Examination.

- (1) In General. The court may examine prospective jurors or may permit the attorneys for the parties to do so.
- (2) Court Examination. If the court examines the jurors, it must permit the attorneys for the parties to:
 - (A) ask further questions that the court considers proper; or
 - (B) submit further questions that the court may ask if it considers them proper.

Rule 24 gives the district court broad discretion in determining the appropriate scope and

method of jury voir dire. See U.S. v. Hawkins, 658 F.2d 279, 283 (5th Cir. 1981). This broad discretion extends to the decision whether to propound questions proffered by counsel. See id.

At the outset, the Court notes that while many of the questions contained in the pretrial juror questionnaire are already part of the Court's standard voir dire examination, there are a number of submitted questions that would not be "proper" under any reading of Rule 24. Further, other than conclusory allegations of "overt racial discrimination in the past" and "an undercurrent of bias against African-Americans," Claville has not made a specific showing that the relief he seeks in this motion is necessary. Record Document 45-2 at 1 & 2. The Court believes that its standard voir dire examination will adequately develop any knowledge or prejudice concerning this case that a prospective juror may have. Further, if it appears during voir dire that supplemental questions are needed, the Court will entertain such a request at that time. Thus, based on the Court's broad discretion under Rule 24, the instant motion is denied.

Accordingly,

IT IS ORDERED that the Motion for Pretrial Juror Questionnaire and to View the Juror Questionnaires (Record Document 45) filed by the defendant, Vernon Claville, be and is hereby **DENIED**.

THUS DONE AND SIGNED in Shreveport, Louisiana on this the 20th day of March, 2008.


S. MAURICE HICKS, JR.
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE